

The University of Reading

Dealing with tobacco companies

There is no legal basis for the University to place a blanket restriction on dealing with tobacco companies. However, the University has a long standing practice in place, approved by the Senate, that when such a situation arises, the University will make a decision on whether to engage with a tobacco company on a case by case basis. This decision will be made giving consideration to, and expecting to follow, the advice set out in the Cancer Research UK Code of Practice on Tobacco Industry Funding to Universities.

(http://www.cancerresearchuk.org/sites/default/files/policy_july2015_codeofpractice_tag.pdf)

Under the code of practice a 'Tobacco Company' means a company, entity or organisation (or groups or combinations of the same) whose business other than for an insignificant part (i.e. less than 10% of its revenue), is the development, production, promotion, marketing, or sale of tobacco in any country of the world, or is a subsidiary or a holding company or affiliate of the same. E-cigarette companies, fully or partially owned by the tobacco industry, are also considered tobacco companies under this definition. The Code of Practice states that if a university accepts donations from the tobacco industry Cancer Research UK will consider that it has a duty to publicly criticise the funding.

Furthermore, the Code of Practice sets out that Cancer Research UK will not provide financial support to those supported by tobacco industry funding. It will also not provide financial support where those who are, or would be, supported by Cancer Research UK funds are working in such proximity to others supported by tobacco industry funding that there is any possibility or likelihood that facilities, equipment or other resources will be shared. The Code states that the application of this rule would also apply to e-cigarette companies which are fully or partially owned by tobacco companies. It is made clear that where Cancer Research UK is considering awarding major new funding, association of the university with the tobacco industry will be a key criterion.

The Code sets out that Cancer Research UK will consider funding research teams in close proximity of those funded by an *independent* e-cigarette company, those in receipt of funding from *independent* e-cigarette companies and those working alongside *independent* e-cigarette companies, where independence for e-cigarette companies is understood as the absence of ownership, funding, or comparable engagement with a tobacco company.

The code makes it clear that Cancer Research UK will continue to examine the questions raised by e-cigarettes and by the rapidly changing structure of the e-cigarette industry and that it will therefore regularly review its approach.

Any member of staff who is likely to be involved in a decision about whether or not to accept funding from the tobacco industry or enter into a contract with a tobacco company (including non-research agreements, such as placement agreements) should read the Cancer Research UK guidance and ensure that they are keeping it in mind. All decisions about whether the University should enter into a contract or receive funding from a tobacco company should be raised with the University Executive Board by contacting the University Secretary in the first instance.

Dr R.J. Messer (University Secretary)

Julie Rowe (Director of Legal Services)